The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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SHARED.

I said it in the meadow path,
I say it on the mountain stairs,—
The best things any mortal hath
Are those which every mortal shares.

The air we breathe, the sky, the breeze,
The light without us and within,
Life with its unlocked treasuries,
God's riches are for all to win.

The grass is softer to my tread
For rest it yields unnumbered feet;
Sweeter to me the wild-rose red
Because she makes the whole world sweet!

Into your heavenly loneliness
Ye welcomed me, O mountain peaks!
And me in every guest you bless
Who reverently your mystery seeks.

And up the radiant peopled way
That opens into worlds unknown,
It will be life's delight to say,
"Heaven is not heaven for me alone!"

—*Lucy Larcom.*

If you find it hard to do your duty, try to do more, not less. Adopt a higher standard, go up to a higher ground. J. F. C.

AS A LITTLE CHILD.

What are the natural characteristics of children, which, coming to them without effort and without praise, it would yet be the highest goodness and the highest blessedness in a man if he is able to retain in connection with all his wisdom, experience, temptations, daily struggles, knowledge of evil, and the deadening power of custom?

The child, in its first years, is entirely open to impressions from without. Its own individuality, or self-consciousness, does not yet obscure or distort the image of anything that God presents to it. It lives in immediate contact with nature, and receives direct into the soul, through the senses, the spirit she breathes, the joy she imparts. All the spiritual experiences of a child are of the nature of sensations. God, through his universe, impresses it at once with wonder, delight, trust, love, and ineffable dreamings and imaginations. A man is apt to lose this immediate communication with the universe, with the symbols of God in his works. The man has so colored his mind with his own cares, thoughts, sins, selfishness, and sufferings that he sees nothing but himself. His nature is no more a clear, unoccupied mirror on which God can impress spiritual images. He is too busy or too anxious, too worldly or too care-worn.

And, as the spiritual life of little children is quite receptive, offering itself freely to God and nature for whatever they can impress upon it, and not, as at a later age, coloring all the universe with their own inward world of small thoughts and cares, so is their life of duty quite external, and therefore free and healthful. There is no morbid self-inspection, no waste of the energies of work in barren conflicts with self, in questionings of diseased feelings. Their way is well defined and clear. They live

under a distinct rule that troubles them with no uncertainties. They know what they ought to do, they know what they ought not to do; and all the rest is boundless liberty. When their simple duty is discharged, and they are free from the infringement of direct command, their sense of irresponsibleness is complete; and the joy natural to all who are unburdened breaks out in the exuberance of innocence undisturbed by any shadow of sin or fear of an invisible and often incredible Lawgiver. To men duty comes in such questionable forms, with demands at once so indefinite and so innumerable, that seldom can they be so true and faithful, so equal to all difficulties, that conscience, by the natural blessing of God, sets them free from all uneasy reproach, so that even the best men are apt to live in a morbid fear that God looks upon them as short-comers,—a fear which takes the natural joy out of life.

And the same externality of life gives not only great vividness, but also an entire unity to the personal affections of childhood. The instinct of a child in regard to those with whom it lives is something totally different from the complex judgment of a man. Children do not qualify or balance their feelings. They take with unerring truth the impression of character which the obvious facts express, and adhere to it without abatement, though there may be much that they cannot understand. Hence a child's faith in a parent who deserves the name is absolute. It has received the impression direct from Nature herself, and it cannot be set aside. In opposition to so much experience it has no doubts and no misgivings; for as yet it is not a questioning and sceptical, but simply a receptive being. Its affections are not matters to be reasoned about, but strong personal experiences. It does not believe: it feels and knows. And this which the child thinks of the parent is just what the parent will not think of God. He will not let his love and faith grow out of his simple experiences of God's goodness. He will not let his heart come into such immediate communication with the heavenly Father as the heart of the child does with himself. And so, instead of imbibing an ineffable trust through feeling and knowing and experiencing, he drops the personal contact with God, and loses faith simply by ceasing to look into the face of him on whom we depend. The parent refuses to become a child, and to receive directly into the heart the peace that would come to it from the countenance of the heavenly Father. He deals with life as a hard problem, and receives no light upon the bare facts from personal affection toward God. If a child was to be related in this way to its daily life and discipline without receiving directly into its heart the love that is in the smile, the eyes, the tones, the daily care and visible presence of the parent, it would speedily have as little of loving faith as we have in God. We have to do with our souls toward God what the child does with its senses toward the earthly parent,—receive freshly the experiences of his goodness, and build up an unlimited faith thereon.

The same vividness of external impression fosters the moral imagination, so that there is nothing for which childhood is more remarkable than for its ideality. It is as happy on a cottage floor as in marble halls, happier in the arms of its nurse than in the arms of princes. It has a universal fellowship, and makes friends of everything, animate or inanimate. No incongruities disturb it. Wherever it is, it exerts its own royalty, and makes all things fall in with its imaginings. The simplest material on which it can exert its own plastic power, and group and fashion for itself, is dearer to it than the most costly toy or the most exquisite workmanship. Nature is, then, a source of inexhaustible delight. A child is an original observer in the world, to whom every object and every feeling is new. Anywhere it finds enough to employ and to delight it. Not only, thank God, in scenes of beauty,—not only by the seashore, a pebbly beach, a running stream, on the grass beneath the trees, a child is in mysterious communion with God, full of incommunicable feelings. Anywhere, if it is only not made wretched by human interference or neglect, it finds enough for its full exercise and joy. It cannot reason about or analyze or communicate what Nature is teaching; but it is receiving from her priceless lessons. And her lessons are not tasks for the memory, but divine impressions upon the sentient being. She teaches by imparting joy, by awakening love, by kindling fancy, by

exciting mysterious curiosity. A child may thus readily learn by direct knowledge that Nature is love, that God is love, just as it learns that its mother's heart is love. But men lose these direct experiences. They deal with the discipline of life, and look very little into the face of the Parent who has arranged it. They see God through man's world; and they see him very little through his own. Or, at the best, they read books, which contain only the descriptions of what Nature is. Education itself may come between us and God by giving us only second-hand impressions, the echoes of echoes. And hence the feebleness which is so often characteristic of learned men. Nature is the original teacher; and there stands the child, and drinks at the fountain.

Now, it is impossible to bring before us these characteristics of childhood — their fresh openness to all natural impressions— without obscuring or distorting them, the mirror of the soul not yet being soiled by wrong, or too much occupied with self. Their clear law of external duty in obedience to known orders, with a freedom from all morbidness, and the full gush of their natural joyousness, when this simple obedience has been paid; the simplicity of their affections; the unqualified character of their trust and love, derived from actual experiences; the activity and exuberance of imagination, supplying out of their own stores whatever to duller eyes seems wanting in the reality; the living out of their own feelings without respect of persons or places, and the consequent absorption and penetration of their whole being by whatever has the power to interest them, and the absence of all pretence, which weakens every faculty it touches,—it is impossible to bring these things before us, however imperfectly, without feeling the extreme difficulty of preserving, unspoiled, our childlike aptitudes and frames. It is far from widening the way that leads to heaven to tell us that children in heart may enter there,—all who can carry with them their freshness, their truth, their spirituality, the direct vision of their spiritual senses, their immediate contact with God and nature. Nor is this all; for it is not the mere freshness of a child nor the simplicity of a child nor the negative innocence of a child nor the helpless dependence and submission of a child that a man is to take with him into heaven, but all these in combination with knowledge and strength, and long struggle with difficulties, and much experience of temptation, and converse with all alien things. For the child is not a Christian, but only in its instinctive state, before exposure to temptation, the natural image of that spiritual harmony, repose, and trustingness, to which the man, through exposure and conflict, by the force of his inward purpose and obedience to the highest law he knows, must finally attain. . . .

Like children, we know enough for duty and for trust; and, if we occupy ourselves contentedly with this, and anticipate nothing that we do not need, we shall open safely into fuller measures of knowledge and of faith, and into higher service. If we could imagine a very young child becoming dissatisfied with the knowledge it has of the real nature and life of its parents,— its capacities remaining the same,—that would express the attitude of many discontented and presumptuous men toward God.

Again, look at the mind of a very young child, and carry on your thoughts to the time when that child shall have become a man,—a skilful mechanic, a wise merchant, a great statesman, a profound philosopher. Can any change, any new aspect of existence that death and the future world may bring, surpass the greatness of that change which you can trace with your own eyes? Compare the mind of a very young child with the mind of Newton. Compare the life of a very young child with the life of a man on whose thoughtfulness, knowledge, resources, and powers of action any great interests depend. You see a transformation, a new creature, as signal as immortality itself could produce. Yet this change is from simple obedience to the laws of growth, going on from day to day doing what lay before us, without doubt or disbelief of what the future would bring. And supposing God to have given us an intimation or promise of some yet nobler condition of existence, as the very fact that we raise a question about it shows that he has done, then for men to doubt and disbelieve because of difficulties and the greatness of the change is much the same thing as if children were to doubt that in time they were to grow up and fill their fathers' places,

which they never do, though their ignorance of what their father's place really is is at least as great as our ignorance of immortality. Certainly, a thoughtful and spiritual man may know more of the state of the soul after death than a "little child" knows of the thoughts of a great statesman, or of the problems of a great philosopher, or of the life and resources of a great general, or even of the acquirements and capabilities of any skilled laborer. And, therefore, the child's undisturbed life of growth and faith is pointed out by Christ as an example for the man, who, whether on earth or in heaven, or through eternity, can never be anything more than a child of God.

And Christ himself is always the perfect example both of what his precepts meant and of how they are to be carried into practice. We have the Word, and the Word made flesh. For he is the living Son who always preserved toward his Father and his God the simplicity, the trustingness, the obedience, the dependent relations, and the untroubled heart of a little child.

May God give to us all, whether young or old, this highest grace of Christ, a heart that never ages, that we may know the beauty of this childlike spirit and hold it as the root of life; that we may become wise without losing our simplicity and freshness, and strong without parting with our meekness, and self-reliant without spoiling our modesty and humility; that we may know the evil that is in the world without losing our innocence and guilelessness and unsuspiciousness and ready faith in others; that in Saint Paul's words, though in understanding we are men, we may still be children in our freedom from evil and from evil thoughts, and that our childlike trust in the dear love of our God may go with us through all trials and darkness, until that day when we shall lay down our heads in death, feeling with Christ that we are going to our eternal life in the bosom of the Father.—*John Hamilton Thom.*

The sense of moral obligation is in every human soul. This holy monitor, this sacred, solemn voice, is from grace, from love. It is the Father's arm, held round every child, to keep him safe from evil. J. F. C.

THE STILL HOUR.

HEAVEN NOT AFAR OFF.

Father, thy wonders do not singly stand,
Not far removed where feet have seldom strayed:
Around us ever lies the enchanted land,
In marvels rich to thine own sons displayed.

In finding thee are all things round us found;
In losing thee are all things lost beside;
Ears have we, but in vain sweet voices sound,
And to our eyes the vision is denied.

Open our eyes that we that world may see,
Open our ears that we thy voice may hear,
And in the spirit land may ever be,
And feel thy presence with us always near.

—*Jones Very.*

The sight of great truths and devotion to great causes transfigure our friendship and our love. Friendship is only a habit of being together, love is only a fire of straw, flaring and falling away in a moment, unless its soul is some generous aim, some noble inspiration. But with these, when we talk with our friends, they are transfigured; and we are talking with Moses and Elias, with prophets and saints. Their garments are white as the light; their faces shine as the sun. For, as Jesus is the mirror in which we see the face of God, so are all good men and women, in their better moments, the illustration to our hearts of the great prophets and saints of the earth. They are our prophets and saints, our heroes and martyrs. What would life be without them? They encourage our faith in all things good and fair, and open to us beforehand the portals of a higher world.

Sometimes Christ becomes transfigured to us, as he once was to Peter and John. Sometimes we see him and understand him far better than at other times. Our hearts burn within us as he talks with us. He opens to us the Scriptures. Technicalities fall away. We do not ask any theological questions about Jesus, whether he was Son of God or man, natural or supernatural. But we seem to see our Master and Friend, as Stephen saw him,—a dear human face, a look of compassionate tenderness to us, a pity for our temptations and sins, a divine heart, full of God, yet a human heart, all manhood, too. And the Scriptures grow

clear in such moments, grow intensely interesting, whereas they were before dull. Now every word is filled with fresh life. The Bible becomes transfigured: it is like earth in this spring-time, every part swelling into leaves and blossoms, every part instinct with life. We study the words of the Bible, always expecting to find something new in them.

So, also, is death transfigured to us, as we live in the light of God's truth and love. The old death is abolished. There is no such thing as death,—only change, only progress, since Christ came. The other world grows fair and near, grows sweet and tender. It repels no more: it attracts us. We enjoy this life, are glad to stay and work: we are ready for the other, being sure that also will bring us enough to know, enough to love, enough to do.

Such are the hours of transfiguration which God sends us from time to time to ennoble our lives. We sometimes call them the coming of his holy spirit. These moments of inward illumination are the master-lights of all our being. They go with us always hid in our heart. They are undying convictions, from which we can never escape, teaching us that truth, right, goodness, are realities, and shall never pass away.

These hours of transfigured life are so precious that we wish to detain them. But this is not the law of our existence. When Peter said, "It is good to be here," he said the truth; but, when he added, "Let us build three tents and stay here," he wist not what he said. Monasticism tried to build such tents in these high places of life, and to live on the mount of transfiguration, but failed. Sentimental and emotional piety try to live in the upper air of high-wrought enthusiasm, in the solitudes of devotion, always alone with the only God. But that fails also. It is not meant that we should always live on this mountain, in this high, lonely solitude of worship. We must come down, as Jesus did, to mingle with the world, and do our work in the world.

Let us thank God for these hours on the mount of transfiguration. They make our common life better and nobler. We go on our common way illuminated by these heavenly visions. They preserve us from doubt and despair. They are the seed of a better future for us all,—the small kernels, the little acorns, into which God has put the vast harvests and noble forests of the coming years.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE BIBLE CLASS.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

Now, for the first time, Jesus had spoken openly to his disciples of the hour of death and defeat that he saw approaching, like a dark thunder-cloud. It is a very interesting thing that, while the apparent result of this would be the total failure of all his hopes for the Jewish nation and for the world, he yet did not lose his faith in God's power and will to effect in some way the good of which he had expected to be the instrument. That there was here, nevertheless, a real temptation—a temptation partly foreseen at the time of the fast in the wilderness—is, I think, shown by the severity of his reproof to Peter. The Satan of the story of the temptation now took the shape and voice of his own friend and disciple, Peter, whom he had shortly before lovingly praised and thanked for the faith which brought him hope and comfort in that dark hour.

It must be remembered that the gift of foreseeing the future comes from that clear insight which perceives the factors of the present situation.* Jesus had, no doubt, seen from the first the great difficulties and dangers with which he must struggle to accomplish the end he had in view. But only with the death of John the Baptist did defeat and death seem inevitable, success impossible. Therefore, in that hour the temptation of using worldly expediency (for an unselfish end) must have come with full force upon him.

For strength to resist this temptation, and bear to the end the fearful trial of seeing his generous purpose brought to naught by the sins of others,—the revengeful temper of the Pharisees, the hard exclusiveness of the priests, the feebleness of Pilate, the malice of Herod, the treachery of Judas,

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*See sermon by James Freeman Clarke, "How the Insight of Jesus led to Foresight." (Given by Post-office Mission of Church of Disciples. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass.)

the timidity of the apostles,—Jesus "went up into a mountain to pray," taking with him Peter, James, and John.*

Mark and Matthew call it "a *high* mountain."

Probably this was one of the spurs of "gigantic, snowy Hermon," not one of the uppermost peaks, as has been sometimes supposed; for the ascent would occupy at least six hours, and be very fatiguing, requiring provision of food and water, while, from the keenness of the air, it would have been impossible to spend the night there.† Edersheim assumes that it may have been upon the Sabbath; but this is a mere conjecture.

"The Sabbath sun had set; and a delicious cool hung in the summer air, as Jesus and the three commenced their ascent. From all parts of the land, far as Jerusalem or Tyre, the one great object in view must always have been snow-clad Hermon. And now it stood out before them—as, to the memory of the traveller in the West, Monte Rosa or Mont Blanc ‡—in all the wondrous glory of a sunset,—first rose-colored, then deepening red, next 'the death-like pallor, and the darkness relieved by the snow, in quick succession.'§ 'From high up there,' as one describes it,‖ 'a deep ruby flush came over all the scene, and warm, purple shadows crept slowly on. The Sea of Galilee was lit up with a delicate greenish-yellow hue between its dim walls of hill. The flush died out in a few minutes, and a pale steel-colored shade succeeded. . . . A long pyramidal shadow slid down to the eastern foot of Hermon, and crept across the great plain. Damascus was swallowed up by it; and, finally, the pointed end of the shadow stood out distinctly against the sky,—a dusky cone of dull color against the flush of the afterglow. It was the shadow of the mountain itself, stretching away for seventy miles across the plain,—the most marvellous shadow, perhaps, to be seen anywhere.

"'The sun underwent strange changes of shape in the thick vapors—now almost square, now like a domed temple—until at length it slid into the sea and out like a blue spark.' And overhead shone out in the blue, one by one, the stars in Eastern brilliancy. We know not the exact direction which the climbers took, nor how far their journey went. But there is only one road which leads from Cæsarea Philippi to Hermon, and one cannot be mistaken in following it: first among vine-clad hills, stocked with mulberry, apricot, and fig-trees; then through corn-fields, where the pear-tree supplants the fig; next through oak coppices and up rocky ravines to where the soil is dotted with dwarf shrubs. And, if we pursue the ascent, it becomes still steeper, till the first ridge of snow is crossed, after which turfy banks, gravelly slopes, and broad snow patches alternate. The top of Hermon in summer—and it can be ascended only in summer or autumn—is free from snow; but broad patches run down the sides, expanding as they descend. To the very summit it is well earthed; to five hundred feet below it, studded with countless plants, higher up with dwarf clumps."

"As they ascended, in the cool of that Sabbath evening, the keen mountain air must have breathed strength into the climbers, and the scent of snow—for which the parched tongue would long in summer's heat—have refreshed them. We know not what part may have been open to them of the glorious panorama from Hermon, embracing as it does a great part of Syria from the sea to Damascus, from the Lebanon and the gorge of the Litany to the mountains of Moab, or down the Jordan valley to the Dead Sea, or over Galilee, Samaria, and on to Jerusalem and beyond it. But such darkness as that of a summer's night would creep on. And now the moon shone out in dazzling splendor, cast long shadows over the mountain, and lit up the broad patches of snow, reflecting their brilliancy on the objects around."*

What happened on that "mountain top"?

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* It is interesting that Luke several times speaks of Jesus as praying, when the other evangelists omit it. See Luke iii. 21, ix. 18, besides Luke ix. 28.

† Tristram speaks of being "painfully affected by the rarity of the atmosphere."

‡ One of the names of Hermon means Mont Blanc (Shemir), Deut. iii. 9, Ezek. xxvii. 5. In Rabbinic writings it is designated as "the snow mountain" (Edersheim).

§ Tristram. ‖ Conder.

* This description is from Edersheim, "based on the graphic account of the ascent by Tristram."

What we hear of it from Peter (for neither Matthew nor Luke was present, nor, indeed, Mark; but Mark's whole Gospel came from Peter) is strange and mysterious. The story says that Jesus prayed (Luke); and, "as he was praying" (Luke), "the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became white and dazzling." Matthew says, "He was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as the light." Mark, "He was transfigured before them; and his garments became glistering, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can white them."* "And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah, talking with him" (Matthew). "And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus" (Mark). "And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease † which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." Luke says here, "Now *Peter* and they that were with him were *heavy with sleep*." Neither Mark nor Matthew allude to this drowsiness; but, from the mention of Peter's name, it seems as if Luke obtained his information from Peter. Luke goes on, "But, when they were *fully awake*" (or "having remained awake"), "they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him."

This passage in Luke suggests a conversation with Peter, and questions asked by Luke. Luke continues, "And it came to pass, as they were parting from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles [or "booths"], one for thee and one for Moses and one for Elijah, not knowing what he said." These words of Peter are nearly the same in all three accounts. Perhaps Peter was only half awake. Mark says, "For he wist not what to answer; for they became sore afraid." Matthew says: "While he was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and, behold, a voice out of the cloud, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him. And, when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid." Mark's account is substantially the same, but he omits the words "in whom I am well pleased." Luke says, "They feared as they entered into the cloud." Matthew's story ends: "And Jesus came, and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And, lifting up their eyes, they saw no one, save Jesus only." Mark says: "And suddenly, looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only, with themselves." Luke says "And, when the voice came [or "was passed"], Jesus was found alone."

John does not tell the story at all. This seems a pity; for he was present, which none of the other evangelists were. Two of the three accounts seem to have come from Peter, possibly all three.

Matthew and Mark both say that Jesus charged them not to speak of this night's experience until he should have risen from the dead; Luke, only that they "held their peace, and told no man in those days any of the things which they had seen."

It has been justly suggested that Peter's acknowledged sleepiness prevents his being a very good reporter, and the circumstance of the cloud may have bewildered and confused the situation yet more.

All sorts of explanations have been given of this story. It was a myth. It was a dream of Peter's. Two men came as messengers from the Jews to beg Jesus once more to allow them to use his influence against Herod, and to let himself be made king in Herod's place. It does not appear that Jesus told the disciples who Moses and Elijah were. So the recognition of them by Peter seems strange.

These, however interesting, are all minor points. What is really the most important thing in the story and what we may all believe, is that there are moments in which the soul shines through the body, thus showing the power of spirit over matter, and the strength and reality of the spiritual life. We have all seen examples of this. Can we doubt that Jesus was the most striking example of all?

Even the reality of the appearance of Moses and Elijah is a secondary matter. There is nothing impossible in this. There may be moments in which the doors of the spiritual world are thrown open; and, if it be ever so, it would be so sometimes for Jesus.

*The words "as snow" are spurious, and have been omitted in the revised version.

† Or "departure."

And, if we ask, Why should it be so at this especial time? the answer is not far to seek.

I believe it to be an unfailing spiritual law that to resist a strong temptation is to receive a new influx of spiritual life. With Jesus the struggle was over, and the victory had come. And, as "angels ministered unto him" when the devil had left him at the time of the temptation in the wilderness, so now the heavens were opened to him, and he talked with Moses and Elijah; and he heard the voice of God, as at his baptism, saying, "This is my beloved Son." We may mistake or misunderstand the outward form of the experience; but we cannot be mistaken in the inner, spiritual truth,—the power of the soul over the body, the law by which the spiritual nature gains force and vitality.

Jesus seems not to have answered Peter's proposal to remain on the mountain, and build three tabernacles. The expression "suddenly looking round about" implies a sudden arousing or awakening on Peter's part. He was surprised to see Jesus alone.

So they went down the mountain together, and on the way they wondered what Jesus meant by speaking of rising from the dead. They also asked him, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must first come?" And he answered, "Elijah indeed cometh first, and restoreth all things; but I say unto you that Elijah is come already, and they knew him not." And the disciples understood that he spoke of John the Baptist.

L. F. C.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.*]

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The following books are offered by the Cambridge Branch. Address Mrs. C. W. Kettell, 3 Brewster Street, Cambridge, Mass. Old correspondents will please address the members to whom they have formerly written. In order to receive books from the Cambridge Branch, it will be necessary henceforth to send a reference with the *first* request.

EDUCATIONAL.

Worcester's "Pronouncing Spelling Book"; Hill's "Principles of Rhetoric"; Swinton's "School Composition"; Bradbury's "Elementary Geometry"; "Little Birdie's Picture Primer"; Hillard's "Third Reader"; Peck's "Arithmetic"; Stickney's "Fourth Reader"; "Second Lessons in Arithmetic," Wheeler; Monroe's "Practical Speller"; "The Normans in Europe"; Avery's "Elements of Natural Philosophy"; "Homer," Gladstone; "Franklin Primer"; Swinton's "Elementary Grammar and Composition"; Tower's "Elementary Grammar"; Hillard's "Fourth Reader"; Balfour Stewart's "Physics"; Cornell's "Primary Geography"; "How Plants behave," Gray; Colburn's "First Lessons"; "Foundations of Rhetoric," A. S. Hill; Higginson's "Young Folks' History of the United States"; Hill's "Geometry"; Strong's "Exercises in English"; Wentworth's "Elementary Algebra"; Quackenbos's "Elementary History of United States"; Monroe's "Story of our Country"; "Man's Chemistry," Storer; Kirkland's "Short History of France"; "The Parts of Speech, and How to use them"; "Graded Spelling Book"; Northend's "Dictation and Pronunciation Exercises"; Anderson's "School History of England"; Franklin's "Elementary Arithmetic"; Longman's "School Composition"; Shepard's "Elements of Chemistry"; Chittenden's "English Composition"; Colburn's "Intellectual Arithmetic"; Appleton's "Introductory Fourth Reader"; Harrington's "Graded Spelling Book"; "Brief History of the United States"; Willson's "Third Reader"; Hillard's "Second Reader"; Appleton's "Third Reader"; Hall's "First Lessons in Geography"; Adams's "History of England in Rhyme"; Wentworth and Hill's "Geometry"; Hazen's "Complete Spelling Book"; Sewall's "Dictation Exercises"; Swinton's "Word Primer"; Swinton's "Third Reader"; Stickney's "Second Reader"; Appleton's "Second Reader"; "Easy Steps for Little Feet"; "The World at Home"; "Geographical Reader II."; Liebig's "Animal Chemistry"; Parker's "Natural and Experimental Philosophy."

MISCELLANEOUS.

"Friends in Feathers and Fur"; "The Early Plantagenets," Stubbs; "Pictures of Europe," Bartol; "Mischief's Thanksgiving"; "Book of Nature" (Plants); "Exercise and Training," Ralfe; "Little Folk Songs"; "Climbing and Sliding"; "Poetry for Children"; "The Little Nortons"; "Small Fruit Culturist"; "Ten Acres Enough"; "Woman in the Nineteenth Century"; "Centennial Exposition Described"; "Children's Own French Book"; "Infant's Own French Book"; a few French and German Stories.

The Lowell Branch offers the following: *North American Review*, 1893, eight numbers, 1894, four numbers, 1890, 1892, 1895, odd numbers; *Journal Household Economics*, two odd numbers; *New England Kitchen*, four odd numbers; *Old and New*, 1870, 1871, 1872, 1873, ten numbers, 1874, nine numbers; "Lays of Ancient Rome," Macaulay; Wordsworth's "Poems," edited by Matthew Arnold; "Impressions of Theophrastus Such," "Romola," George Eliot; Carlyle's "Reminiscences," edited by Froude; "One Hundred Choice Pieces for Reading and Speaking," Fresno.

All the above books in paper. Address Miss A. F. Anderson, 31 Anne Street, Lowell, Mass.

REQUESTS.

READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING.

Libraries.

Standing requests for libraries from: —

Mrs. O. A. Langston, Sidney, Comanche County, Texas;

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Cayuta, Schuyler County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, La Pine, Crenshaw County, Alabama;

Mrs. Isadore E. Rice, Oakland, Oregon.

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California,

Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

The editor would like to receive some more copies of *The Cheerful Letter* of February and March, 1893, from those who do not desire to keep the numbers in file. Address them Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass., until September 30.

I have always been a reader, but through sickness and misfortune have become so poor I am unable to take a paper; and magazines and the better class of current literature has been out of reach for years. Please send us some reading matter. For myself any magazines, *Arena* preferred. For my boys, Lee, age seventeen, and Karl, thirteen, books of travel, history, or adventure. For my wife, household affairs. For Mary and Jemmie, aged seven and ten, books of your selection. Charles R. Jordan, Vanndale, Cross County, Arkansas.

I have several correspondents who would like to receive the *Christian Register* regularly. Will any one who is willing to send current numbers (weekly or almost every week), kindly let me know, and I will furnish the addresses. Write to L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass. (until September 30).

Miss Jennie Crawford, Leonidas, St. Joe County, Michigan, asks for *The Home* and *Golden Days*. She is sixteen years of age, and confined to her bed.

I am a member of the Cheerful Letter Society, and should be pleased to receive a French and English Dictionary and a German and English Dictionary for my oldest daughter, who is sixteen years of age, and a Reed and Kellog's Grammar for my other child, who is fourteen years of age, and any standard books of fiction and magazines for myself. Allow me to take this opportunity of thanking the unknown friends who sent me the *Christian Work* and *Public Opinion*. Mrs. F. M. Bissell, Canaseraga, Allegany County, New York.

(We should like to have the names of your daughter and son. If put on our list by name, they will be more likely to receive books.)

Some unknown friend sends me *The Cheerful Letter*. I am always thankful to get it. For I often get lonesome, and I like all good reading matter. I read the books and papers, and then give them to others to read. I would like the song book titled "Song Land Messenger." All reading matter is appreciated. Address Mrs. Hattie D. Wood, Durwood, Indian Territory.

Mrs. M. J. Brooks, Poe, Logan County, Kansas, will be very grateful if some one will send her "Gospel Hymns, No. 5."

The *Mayflower* for 1895–96 is particularly desired by Mrs. K. E. Devine, San Luis Obispo County, California.

Miss Millie Nebergall, Newton, Harvey County, Kansas, an invalid confined to her bed nearly all of the time, will be grateful for "Gates Ajar," "Charlotte Temple," "Boy Emigrants," and the "Housekeeper."

I am very fond of reading, and would like to have reading sent to me. I would like books such as Miss Alcott's, also Rosa Carey. I would be very thankful to receive any other books or magazines. I am very thankful for *The Cheerful Letter* which some unknown friend is sending to me. I have a mother and two brothers younger than myself. I am a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church here. Anna Wakefield, Cleveland, Le Sueur County, Minnesota.

Mrs. Lou. Davis, Tioga, Texas, afflicted with rheumatism, is anxious to receive reading matter. She is the mother of three bright girls, thirteen, eleven, and eight, who love to read. Mrs. Davis has not walked a step for seven years. Good reading will be thankfully received and fully appreciated.

(Will not Mrs. Davis send the *names* of her daughters to the Book Club, or, better, let them write themselves.)

Mrs. Maggie Coe, Tioga, Texas, asks for sheet music for the piano, from third grade to fifth preferred.

Miss Bertha Winkler, Straw, North Carolina, will be glad of *any* intermediate school books.

The editor asks her friends to kindly notice that it is not the *Christian Register* itself that she desires to receive, but *offers* from those who will send it to correspondents whose addresses she will supply.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

A CURE FOR UNTRUTH.

The following case will illustrate how a child may be broken of this harmful habit. It was made habitual at school and while at play with other children. The little five-year-old one copied precisely what she heard and saw of others. In time she was able to face papa and mamma with a boldness that was astonishing. Her little head at such times was thrown back, and her eyes were defiantly set upon the person questioning her. It must be understood that the child was an extremely bright and lovable one. She was pure in heart and mind, but the little stories flew from her lips like a novel from a writer's pen. They were all there, ready to come at the correct time. She had never been punished for this fault; but she had been frequently admonished, and had had the evil effects of untruthfulness explained, but all was of no avail. Then one of the most efficacious of methods was put into operation by her parents.

It was very amusing, and pitiful at the same time, to observe the little one when, after a good refreshing ramble out of doors in the cold air, she was questioned upon entering as to whether she had done a certain naughty thing. As a matter of course there followed the usual falsehood. Nothing more was said in regard to the matter. Then she, thinking nothing more about the consequences, was told that dinner was ready, waiting for her.

Papa served her with bread and butter while the rest were being served their warm and savory dinner; and now and then the children would say, "Papa, Isabella has no dinner!" "Why, yes," papa exclaimed, "there it is directly in front of her, don't you see it?" And Isabella was asked if she did not see it, but she remained silent; and with tears in her eyes her little lips grew longer and longer. Finally, when pudding, candy, and nuts were passed, and when papa still continued to declare he had helped Isabella to the same as the rest, she became thoughtful, and probably wondered how her own dear papa could tell a story, and such a big one.

I venture to say that any one who knows what a child's appetite is after hard play in the bracing air will acknowledge the usefulness and practical success of this method. It proved to be so with our little one, for after a few experiments falsehood-telling became a thing extinct.—*P. F. A. A., Columbus, Mo., in Babyhood.*

Was this a good way to cure the habit? Are there any objections to it? Might there be a better method?

Will not some one else give us her views on this important question?

Any young person (girl or boy), between twelve and twenty years old, is invited to write to us a short letter, telling something about himself or herself. Address these letters to Mrs. Nichols, the secretary of the Book Club, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass. Be sure to give your own full name and address, and your father's or mother's name and address.

To explain what we want to hear from you, we will suggest some subjects to write about. Describe your home and neighborhood; how you occupy yourself through the day; your age, and the names and ages of your brothers and sisters; whether you go to school, and, if not, what opportunities for study you have at home; what periodicals you are receiving through *The Cheerful Letter;* if there are churches or schools anywhere near you; whether you would like to correspond with any young person of your own age in another part of the country; what are your favorite books and favorite pursuits.

These letters will be printed in *The Cheerful Letter*, so far as there is room for them.

(We have received very few letters in response to this request, printed already in June and in August. We print it again, reminding our young readers that by responding they will be more likely to receive books. *N.B.* 1. Write clearly. 2. Write *short* letters. 3. Write on one side only of the paper.)

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There will be no meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange in July, August, September.

The personal address of our treasurer, Miss Louise Howe, will be Box 21, Nahant, Mass., until farther notice. But subscriptions may be sent to her or left for her at 25 Beacon Street, at any season.

The editor's personal address will be Magnolia, Mass., from June 10 until the last of September. She would kindly request the friends of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to send their subscriptions and changes of address to Miss Howe, not to her; and offers of books to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary, according to directions on this page.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE: —

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

Our Book Club department has grown so large that we shall ask of all who in the future write to us for books to send the name of some minister as a reference,— when possible, the minister of the church to which they belong.

We remind all who send parcels or boxes with books, papers, etc., to correspondents or to libraries, that it is absolutely necessary to write at the same time to the receiver, enclosing the receipt which shows that the express or freight charges on the package have been paid. For want of this precaution, valuable packages have never been received. It is not probable that any of our *Cheerful Letter* friends send packages without prepaying them, but it is a common mistake of the express agents to charge the receiver for a prepaid package.

N.B.—PLEASE READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING FOR BOOKS.

With each hour the world's aspect changes, as if under the hands of a million invisible scene-shifters. This morning I looked out before daybreak. The stars shone with lustrous brilliance. The night wind sang its mystical song. Nature seemed to be holding some solemn, jubilant revel, in whose pure, celestial joy the heart of man was bidden to partake. A few hours hence and the daily divine spectacle of the sunset will unfold before us its loveliness and peace and awe. We dig and toil, we worry and fret, and all the while close over us bends the infinite wonder and beauty of Nature, saying: "Look up, my child! Feel my smile, and be glad!"—*George S. Merriam, "The Way of Life."*

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, —Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, —Miss Louise Howe, Box 21, Nahant, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Miss Howe at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Nichols; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.